

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1 1. A method of generating test code for an automated test procedure
2 applicable to a system comprising a plurality of interconnected elements, the method
3 comprising the steps of:

4 defining a source file having a plurality of tags, each tag associated with a
5 member of a library of executable code objects defining a set of instructions for
6 performing a portion of the automatic test procedure;

7 generating a test plan in a conversational language from the source file; and
8 generating the test code for the automated test procedure from the source file.

1 2. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of generating a test plan
2 comprises the steps of :

3 translating the tags; and
4 generating a conversational language phrase for each translated tag.

1 3. The method of claim 2, wherein the test plan comprises a test index
2 identifying the system elements tested by the test code, the test index generated by
3 performing the step of scanning the interpreted tags to identify the system elements
4 tested by the test code.

1 4. The method of claim 2, wherein the step of generating a test plan
2 further comprises the steps of:
3 identifying an uninterpretable tag in the test plan; and
4 appending the test plan with an error message identifying the uninterpretable
5 tag.

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1 5. The method of claim 1, wherein the library of executable code objects
2 comprises a first executable code object defining a set of instructions for performing
3 method steps comprising the steps of:
4 issuing a command to a commanded system element; and
5 intercepting a message responsive to the command from the commanded
6 element.

1 6. The method of claim 5, further comprising the step of:
2 evaluating the message responsive to the command; and
3 providing an error message according to the evaluated message.

1 7. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of generating test code for
2 the automated test procedure comprises the step of translating the executable code
3 objects associated with the tag in the source file.

1 8. An apparatus for generating test code for an automated test procedure
2 applicable to a system comprising a plurality of interconnected elements, comprising:
3 means for defining a source file having a plurality of tags, each tag associated
4 with a member of a library of executable code objects defining a set of instructions
5 for performing a portion of the automatic test procedure;
6 means for generating a test plan in a conversational language from the source
7 file; and
8 means for generating the test code for the automated test procedure from the
9 source file.

1 9. The apparatus of claim 8, wherein the means for generating a test plan
2 comprises:

3 means for translating the tags; and

4 means for generating a conversational language phrase for each translated tag.

1 10. The apparatus of claim 9, wherein the test plan comprises a test index
2 identifying the system elements tested by the test code, wherein the test index
3 generated by performing the step of scanning the interpreted tags to identify the
4 system elements tested by the test code.

1 11. The apparatus of claim 7, wherein the means for generating a test plan
2 further comprises:

3 means for identifying an uninterpretable tag in the test plan; and

4 means for appending the test plan with an error message identifying the
5 uninterpretable tag.

1 12. The apparatus of claim 8, wherein the library of executable code
2 objects comprises a first executable code object comprising:
3 means for issuing a command to a commanded system element; and
4 means for intercepting a message responsive to the command from the
5 commanded element.

1 13. The apparatus of claim 12, further comprising:

2 means for evaluating the message responsive to the command; and

3 means for providing an error message according to the evaluated message.

1 14. The apparatus of claim 8, wherein the means for generating test code
2 for the automated test procedure comprises means for translating the executable code
3 objects associated with the tag in the source file.

1 15. A program storage device, readable by a computer, tangibly embodying
2 at least one program of instructions executable by the computer to perform method steps
3 of generating test code for an automated test procedure applicable to a system
4 comprising a plurality of interconnected elements, the method comprising the steps of:

5 defining a source file having a plurality of tags, each tag associated with a
6 member of a library of executable code objects defining a set of instructions for
7 performing a portion of the automatic test procedure;

8 generating a test plan in a conversational language from the source file; and
9 generating the test code for the automated test procedure from the source file.

1 16. The program storage device of claim 15, wherein the method step of
2 generating a test plan comprises the method steps of:

3 translating the tags; and
4 generating a conversational language phrase for each translated tag.

1 17. The program storage device of claim 16, wherein the test plan
2 comprises a test index identifying the system elements tested by the test code, the test
3 index generated by performing the step of scanning the interpreted tags to identify the
4 system elements tested by the test code.

1 18. The program storage device of claim 16, wherein the step of
2 generating a test plan further comprises the method steps of:
3 identifying an uninterpretable tag in the test plan; and
4 appending the test plan with an error message identifying the uninterpretable
5 tag.

1 19. The program storage device of claim 15, wherein the library of
2 executable code objects comprises a first executable code object defining a set of
3 instructions for performing method steps comprising the steps of:
4 issuing a command to a commanded system element; and
5 intercepting a message responsive to the command from the commanded
6 element.

1 20. The program storage device of claim 19, wherein the method steps
2 further comprise the steps of:
3 evaluating the message responsive to the command; and
4 providing an error message according to the evaluated message.

1 21. The program storage device of claim 15, wherein the method step of
2 generating test code for the automated test procedure comprises the method step of
3 translating the executable code objects associated with the tag in the source file.

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